

The State of Texas



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Roger Williams
Secretary of State

BRAC Commission

July 19, 2005

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The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202

Received

Dear Chairman Principi:

On behalf of the citizens of Texas, I want to thank you and Commissioners Turner, Newton and Hill for holding the Regional BRAC Hearing in San Antonio on July 11th. We appreciate the open and deliberative process being followed to provide the President with an unbiased and independent evaluation of the DoD's BRAC recommendations.

One area that I recommend for more discussion and consideration is Homeland Defense, particularly as it relates to the BRAC recommendations for Ellington Field and Naval Station Ingleside. Homeland Defense has been raised by several communities, and I know that the Commission is seeking confirmation that this important subject has been properly addressed. The testimony to date is, at best, inconsistent, and, at worst, badly disconnected from Texas' unique needs and DoD's published *Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support*, dated June 2005.

I recognize that the Commission understands the unique and vested needs that Texas and its Gulf Coast neighbors have for Homeland Defense. Our ports account for over 70 percent of this country's crude oil imports. The Gulf Coast has 51 percent of the nation refining capacity, and the eight ports in Texas and Louisiana account for 80 percent of the commercial tonnage processed by the nation's ports. This country's economy cannot afford the high value assets and commodities in this area to be at risk.

Ellington Airfield and Naval Station Ingleside are ideally situated to provide deterrence and a rapid response capability for the Homeland Defense mission on the Gulf Coast. I encourage you to keep these ideally located facilities open with viable military missions in place to provide the deterrence and protection needed for the Gulf Coast during this precarious era. The risk, as we all know, are too high not to.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger Williams". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Roger Williams